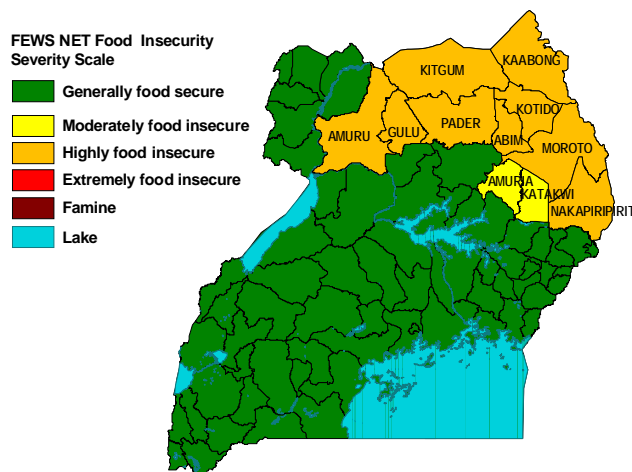


UGANDA Food Security Outlook

October 2008 to March 2009

- Approximately 2.15 million people are moderately to highly food insecure in eastern, northern, and northeastern Uganda, of which only about 1.95 million people currently receive food assistance (in the north and northeast). Outside of these areas, the country will remain generally food secure.
- In the most-likely scenario from January to March 2009, food security will improve slightly, with the number of people food insecure decreasing to 1.75 million. Household food security in eastern Uganda will improve following normal 2008 second-season harvests in November/December, an increase in off-farm food sources, such as fishing, and additional, albeit limited, income-generating opportunities. Sustained civil security and second-season harvests will also improve food security in northern Uganda. In Karamoja, however, the situation will continue to deteriorate, with hunger becoming more intense and widespread following a poor 2008 season. Bimodal districts in the rest of the country will remain generally food secure, supported by average second-season harvests and improved food availability.

Figure 1. Current estimated food security conditions, October to December 2008

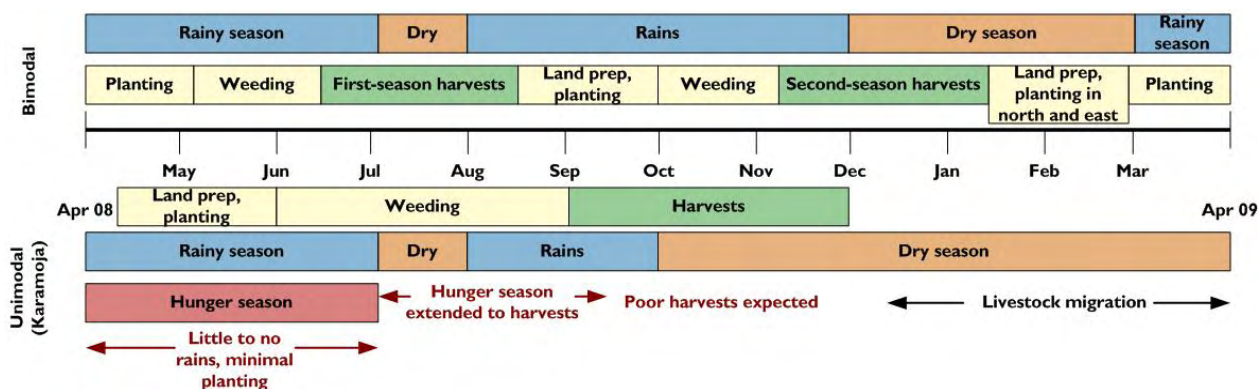


Data: WFP Uganda, UN FAO, GoU; Graphic: FEWS NET Uganda

For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale

- In the worst-case scenario from January to March 2009, a resurgence in civil insecurity, displacement, and lower than normal second-season harvests in the north will coincide with increased civil insecurity in Karamoja (livestock thefts, road ambushes) and below-normal production in eastern districts, affecting at least 2.3 million people in these areas. Even in the worst case scenario however, food security is expected to be normal in bimodal districts.

Seasonal calendar and critical events timeline



Source: FEWS NET Uganda

Current food security conditions (October to December 2008)

Approximately 2.15 million people remain moderately to highly food insecure in northeastern, northern, and eastern Uganda. Of this total, about 1.95 million people in northern and northeastern districts currently receive food assistance through the World Food Program's (WFP) Protracted Relief and Recovery Program (PRRO). Increased rebel activity in that DRC's north Kivu region, has led to an influx of approximately 10,500 refugees into western and southwestern Uganda since mid-October. However, a tenuous cease-fire in DRC has prevented massive inflows of refugees, who are currently able to rely on personal networks to meet their immediate needs. As a result, assistance is being prioritized to Karamoja region, northeastern Uganda, where food insecurity has deteriorated substantially due to failed 2008 harvests, high food prices, poor livestock terms of trade, civil insecurity, poor access to basic services, and poor road access that hampers commercial trade and humanitarian deliveries. Assistance in Karamoja will be needed until September 2009, when next harvests occur.

Households in other areas of the country remain generally food secure, given the continued availability of food stocks from first-season harvests (June to August). Meanwhile, sowing of second-season crops in these bimodal areas has largely finished, and current rains are supporting crop development in the field. Second-season harvests are expected to begin in mid-November. Should the abundant rains continue through November, harvests for bimodal areas are expected to be average for the current quarter, as are pasture and water availability for livestock, supporting food security in these areas. Currently, nominal crop prices remain higher than five year averages and last year's prices. They are likely to remain high, even with a very good harvest, due to high local and regional demand high transportation costs (declining international fuel prices have not yet translated into lower handling costs in the country, due to supply limitations from Kenya).

WFP's PRRO continues to provide assistance to Uganda's food-insecure northern and northeastern districts in the form of general food aid distributions and maternal and child health and nutrition activities, among others. However, mentioned above, logistical and operational hurdles remain and the program is not reaching 200,000 people in need. Eastern flood-affected districts are no longer receiving assistance as of August 2008, pending results of a resource allocation review. Currently, the PRRO's pipeline is facing a shortfall of more than 41,000 MT of food aid for programming through April 2009. Cereals, pulses, and blended food supplies are currently being exhausted, while vegetable oil will only last through January 2009. Given these shortages, food assistance is being prioritized to Karamoja region. Should resource shortfalls continue, progress made in repatriation of IDPs in the north may be compromised, threatening their return home and food security.

At the same time, in August 2008, the United Nations Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) awarded about US \$5.7 million to help humanitarian organizations respond to food and nutrition needs and human and livestock disease outbreaks in Karamoja and northern Uganda. The UN FAO, UNICEF, WFP and WHO will use the funds to implement programs aimed at addressing nutritional, food security, and human and animal health needs, as well as to advocate for vulnerable people in Uganda.

Karamoja Region

Food security continues to deteriorate in Karamoja Region (Abim, Kaabong, Kotido, Moroto, and Nakapiripirit Districts), in northeastern Uganda, where the moderately to highly food insecure population increased to an estimated 750,000 people between July and August 2008. Based on this latest estimate, approximately 78.7 percent of the region's population is currently food insecure. Delayed and below-average rainfall during most of the region's single 2008 agricultural season, now nearly concluded, resulted in limited crop sowing and crop germination/development, with no significant harvests expected. With few crops to harvest, most food-insecure households have already exhausted their food stocks and are now reliant on alternate food sources, including markets. Unfortunately, these households also face severe constraints to food access, given limited income and employment opportunities. WFP continues to provide assistance to Karamoja's food-insecure population. However, general food distributions have been hampered by operational and logistical challenges, primarily food aid pipeline breaks, bad road conditions due to heavy rains in some areas, and sporadic civil insecurity along travel routes that have hindered the timely and adequate delivery of food.

While crop-supporting rains earlier in the season were minimal, rains have been received in many parts of Karamoja since July. The rains, however, have come too late to make any positive impact on the agricultural season, and many agropastoralists have not actively returned to the fields to cultivate crops. However, the recent rains have improved the

quantity and quality of forage and replenished water supplies for livestock. Pasture improvements have also allowed many livestock owners to keep their livestock closer to their homesteads and better protected from raids, while the improved water availability and access has enabled slight improvements in livestock body conditions and productivity. Both factors will ensure improved agropastoral household access to milk and other livestock products as a coping mechanism for reduced cereal availability. Some of the rainfall has helped replenish water sources as well, enabling limited improvements in household water access, although they must still travel long distances, civil insecurity remains an issue, there is congestion at the few functional water points, and insufficient water recharge in some boreholes limits supply.

In contrast to declining prices in previous months, significant livestock price increases have been observed since August in several parts of Karamoja region, partly due to the increased availability of pasture and water and resulting improvements in livestock health, but also due to the presence of more buyers and limited supply. Crop supplies flowing to markets have been low due to the scarcity of stocks in the region and limited inflows into the region from neighboring districts due to sporadic road ambushes that hinder trader movements. Prices remain high in September, reportedly at between 30 to 50 percent above normal levels. Improvements in livestock prices, versus slight increases in cereal prices, are helping improve livestock/cereal terms of trade, allowing improved food access. Overall, however, livestock terms of trade are expected to remain low, and will likely decline until next year's harvest in September/October, as low food supplies will maintain high crop prices and livestock conditions will decline due to poor pasture conditions. Livestock prices are also likely to decline due to increased incidence of disease as the October-April dry season sets in.

Vaccinations against widespread livestock diseases, including *Peste des Petits Ruminants* (PPR) and *Contagious Bovine Pleuropneumonia* (CBPP), is ongoing in Karamoja, facilitated by vaccine provision by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), and will help to reduce livestock deaths and thereby improve household incomes and food security. This exercise, will require at least three million PPR vaccines and 1.5 million CBPP vaccines, of which 2.5 million PPR and 500,000 CBPP vaccines have been procured. Apart from vaccinations, surveillance and diagnosis within Karamoja and along border areas are also critical to prevent a further spread of the disease. To date, however, vaccination has been complicated by the lack of information on the actual animal population in the region.

Aside from farming and livestock activities, to earn income, many people in the region still search for the few labor opportunities available, and sell firewood and charcoal. Some have reportedly migrated to other locations within Karamoja and to neighboring districts in search of food. However, all regular and survival strategies in the region are fraught with a level of risk, given continued civil insecurity. In August, for example, a number of security incidents were reported by Government and humanitarian organizations, including shootings aimed at several commercial transport buses and at a convoy of humanitarian vehicles along Moroto-Kotido road, leading to temporary suspension of movement along the road and disrupting the movement of persons, trade, and assistance. Other security incidents reported related to the theft of livestock. Security incidents such as these will likely continue through the current quarter.

Anecdotal information from district authorities in Karamoja indicates increased movement of people from homesteads to urban centers within the region seeking food and income opportunities to sustain themselves. While migration, especially among pastoralists, is a normal coping mechanism during the dry period, the number of people moving is higher than normal, indicating a deepening of food security problems in the region.

Results of a nutritional study undertaken in Karamoja Region by the Uganda Ministry of Health, International Baby Food Action Network (IBFAN) Uganda, WFP, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in August/September revealed that although nutritional status in the region had improved since February 2008, it remained volatile, with Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates of 9.5 percent and Severe Acute Malnutrition (SAM) rates of 1.2 percent overall. GAM rates were highest in Moroto District, at 12.7 percent, and SAM rates in Moroto and Nakapiripirit Districts, at 1.9 percent. In addition, access to health facilities had dropped from 76.8 percent to 42.4 percent during this period. The survey found that high malnutrition rates were a result of a confluence of factors, including: consecutive poor harvests and extended periods of food insecurity, civil insecurity, low incomes, inadequate access to health and sanitation services, social/cultural beliefs, and inadequate child care. As a result, the survey recommended a holistic, multi-sectoral approach to combating malnutrition in Karamoja (health, nutrition, water, sanitation, protection, etc.).

Northern Uganda

Food security also remains a concern in northern Uganda (Amuru, Gulu, Pader, and Kitgum Districts), although conditions continue to improve. General calm continues, with no Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) activities reported in months. Only sporadic acts of armed banditry have been recorded, which are largely contained through the government's deployment of the army and police. Stable civil conditions thus favor a continued resettlement of formerly internally displaced persons (IDPs), estimated at about 1.2 million people by late 2005, who have gradually moved out of the camps to "transit camps." According to June 2008 statistics from the UN, an estimated 42 percent of compounded IDPs across the four northern districts (Amuru, Gulu, Kitgum, and Pader) are now in such transit camps, while 24 percent have returned to their original homes according to UN June 2008 statistics. The movement to transit locations and homes has enabled many households to access more land and cultivate crops over the past several seasons, gradually improving their food security. Nonetheless, due to various conditions, including inadequate access to open land, limited tools to cultivate, and variable weather conditions, many of these households' are still unable to grow enough food to meet their needs, and their food security thus remains precarious. In the meantime, the World Food Program continues to provide an average 50 percent ration of their daily energy requirements to augment their production.

In addition, several outbreaks of disease have been reported in northern Uganda over the last three to four months. In particular, a Hepatitis E (HEV) outbreak has afflicted nearly 7,600 people in the region, with Kitgum and Pader most affected (about 120 deaths). Gulu district has confirmed seven cases but no deaths. Most of the cases have been reported in populations in "transition locations" and are attributed to poor sanitation, use of contaminated water, and, in some cases, close contact with infected persons. Action by district authorities and non-governmental organizations has helped manage the situation, stabilizing the spread of disease. An increase in malaria has also been reported in northern and eastern Uganda, mainly due to IDP resettlement in areas of dense foliage and the lack of mosquito nets at the household level. In response, district authorities and the Ministry of Health began indoor residual DDT spraying in September in Katakwi district, eastern Uganda.

Fragile food security and health concerns in northern Uganda were evidenced by a June 2008 nutritional survey conducted in Gulu and Amuru Districts by ACF. The survey showed significant increases in malnutrition over the past year, with Global Acute Malnutrition (GAM) rates at 10.8 percent, an increase from 2007. ACF cited greater reliance on variable food production, as compared to dependable rations provided at IDP camps, as a contributing factor to continuing food insecurity. While civil insecurity improves, these high levels of malnutrition and continuing food insecurity emphasize the increased need for nutritional assistance and continuation of food aid flows to the region. Ongoing rehabilitation work on health centers in Gulu and Amuru Districts, however, could help improve the population's access to health services.

Eastern Uganda

Poorly distributed and lower than normal rainfall in Amuria and Katakwi Districts, Teso Region in the east resulted in below-normal first-season harvests (July to August), with only minimal improvements to food stocks and overall food security. Overall, these districts remain moderately food insecure. A September 2008 rapid assessment of these districts confirmed much below-normal 2008 first-season harvests that limited household replenishment of food stocks and improvement of food security in general. Rainfall received in the eastern region since August 2008, including in these two districts, has enabled households to cultivate second-season crops, with a high likelihood for good harvests should sufficient rains be sustained through November. However, should widespread and heavy rains be received, there is a risk of land inundation and flooding, as well as crop loss. At the same time, the few off-farm income opportunities available are enabling household food access from markets, although current prices are reported to be at least twice as high compared to 2007. With limited food availability as well as food access, given low incomes, high prices, and few income opportunities, households in these two districts remain food insecure with improvements not expected until after the second-season harvests, in November and December 2008. While the population of Amuria and Katakwi Districts remains food insecure, WFP suspended food assistance in August 2008 in these areas pending a review of its programs, including results from an Emergency Food Security Assessment (EFSA) conducted in September 2008.

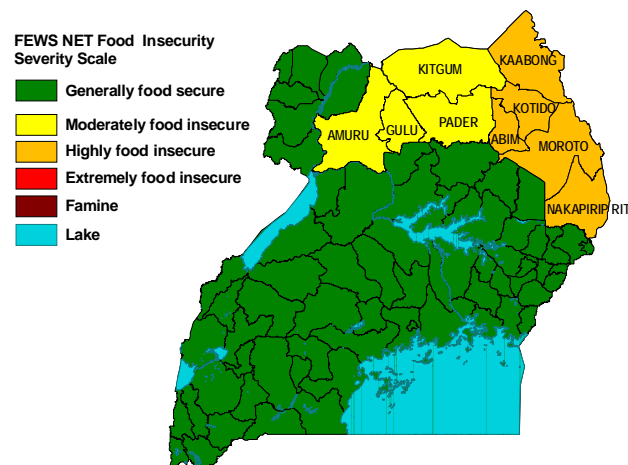
Most-likely food security scenario (January to March 2009)

In the most-likely scenario from January to March 2009, food insecurity in Karamoja will intensify in magnitude and severity, increasing the need of external assistance (Figure 2). Conditions elsewhere, however, will improve. Stable civil security in northern Uganda will encourage additional population resettlement and increase access to land, allowing average second-season crop sowing and harvests and augmenting household production in the region. Conditions will also improve in the east, where normal growing conditions and average second-season harvests are also likely, providing increased income generating opportunities (e.g., agricultural labor), food supplies to markets, and off-farm sources of food (e.g., exchanges), improving food availability and access. In other bimodal areas of the country, average second-season harvests will enable restocking, and conditions will remain generally food insecure. In total, approximately 1.75 million people in northern Uganda and Karamoja, northeastern Uganda, will be food insecure, a decrease from the current level of 2.15 million. However, conditions will have worsened in Karamoja, requiring additional attention and assistance, whereas only modest rations will be required in the north.

During the first quarter of 2009, the majority of people in Karamoja will have exhausted all of their food supplies and will be dependent on external assistance for most of their food needs. Many households will also be forced to resort to additional and more unsustainable coping mechanisms, such as: skipping meals for several days, while children will intermittently have one smaller-than-usual meal per day; selling productive assets; migrating in search of food; eating wild foods that will be harder to find; selling charcoal and wood; and searching for additional, albeit limited, labor opportunities. Bad roads and continued civil insecurity in the region will limit food inflows from neighboring districts, leading to higher market prices throughout the outlook quarter, above those already recorded. With some improvement in pasture and water availability due to rains in the fourth quarter of 2008, as well as continued vaccinations against disease, livestock conditions will slightly improve, increasing the bargaining power of households with livestock to earn better prices. As a result, livestock prices will remain stable but maintain low livestock/cereal terms of trade and still limit adequate pastoralist and agropastoralist access to more cereals per livestock sold. Further, ongoing vaccinations against *Peste des Petits Ruminants* and CBPP will help stem the continued loss of livestock, helping support household coping capacities, especially for poorer households who rely on quick sales of smaller ruminants to meet household needs. However, the overall lack of food available, and its low nutritional content, is likely to cause an overall increase in the region's malnutrition and morbidity rates, especially for children. Food insecurity will remain high in the region, with more households being highly food insecure. At least 750,000 people will continue to require food assistance.

In northern Uganda, normalizing civil security over the past 12 to 18 months will continue to encourage people to resettle and stabilize, permitting greater land access and cultivation of second-season crops. As a result, in the outlook quarter,

Figure 2. Most likely food security scenario, January to March 2009



Data: WFP Uganda, UN FAO, GoU; Graphic: FEWS NET Uganda

For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale

Table 1. Scenario assumptions and indicators
**Most likely food security scenario,
January to March 2009**

- Household food insecurity intensifies in Karamoja, where food access is severely restricted and many households practice unsustainable coping mechanisms.
- However, pastoral and agropastoral households can access limited milk from livestock near their homesteads.
- Relative stability continues in northern Uganda, enabling more households to resettle, stabilize, and benefit from 2008 second-season crops.
- Average harvests improve food availability in Amuria and Katakwi districts in the east, while income generating opportunities enable household access to food from markets.
- Normal food security in most bimodal areas, supported by average second-season harvests.

January to March 2009, regional agricultural production is expected to increase, and overall food security improve. With improving civil security, moreover, there will be improvements in services for education, health, sanitation, water, and similar investments to develop the region, as well as improved marketing. These developments will provide additional employment and income opportunities. Through a series of income generating opportunities, including the sale of crops and employment opportunities in ongoing industrialization and development programs, many households will be able to earn incomes to diversify their sources of food to meet most of their food needs, thereby reducing the need for external assistance. As a result, conditions in northern Uganda are expected to move from high to moderate food insecurity in the outlook quarter. Accordingly, food aid will continue to be provided, but at reduced ration levels and possibly through more targeted mechanisms, to bridge any remaining gaps among those most in need and/or still in camps. The number of people requiring and continuing to receive food assistance in the region will decrease to less than one million.

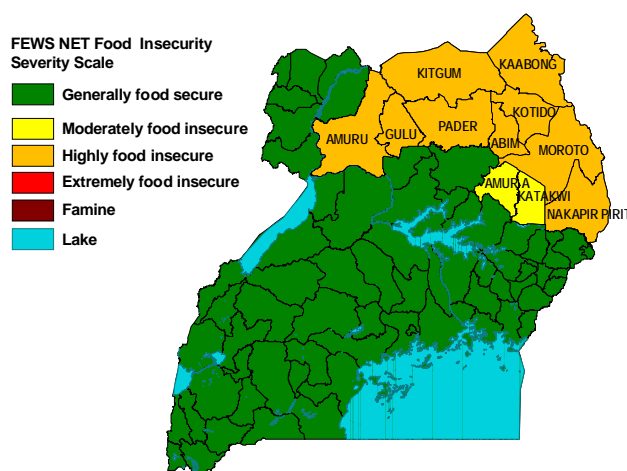
Second season harvests that are underway are gradually increasing the availability of cereals, pulses and tubers; limited improvement in off-farm food sources (e.g., fishing) and income opportunities are also helping enhance food security in eastern Uganda, including food-insecure Amuria and Katakwi districts. Exchanges and social safety networks, meanwhile, will compensate for any gaps for more vulnerable households.

In other bimodal areas of the country, second-season harvests will provide food and replenish food stocks to ensure food security in the January to March 2009 period. Alternative food sources, including from markets, will also be accessible despite an expectation of higher than normal prices. Incidence of crop and livestock diseases is expected to increase to alarming levels. Moreover, rains during the October to December 2008 period will have sustained vegetation and water to enable adequate access to pasture and water for livestock in these districts.

Worst-case food security scenario (January to March 2009)

In the worst-case scenario from January to March 2009, increased civil insecurity and livestock thefts will limit households' movements and ability to seek alternative sources of food, intensifying their already heightened vulnerability. Wet conditions would also likely lead to a high incidence of livestock diseases. Meanwhile, civil security enjoyed in northern Uganda would end, with new attacks by both armed gangs and the LRA, causing people to abandon their homes and crops in the field and triggering a wave of new displacements. In eastern Uganda, above-normal rains will inundate fields, destroying crops, and leading to below-average 2008 second-season harvests from which to rely on in the outlook quarter, while damaged infrastructure would limit movement and supplies to markets. Other bimodal areas could also experience higher than normal rainfall late in 2008, but their impacts would be limited due to water runoff from the fields, thus allowing average harvests and general food security (Figure 3). Overall, deteriorating civil conditions in northern and northeastern Uganda, and low production in eastern Uganda, will increase the number of people moderately to highly food insecure in this scenario to approximately 2.3 million. This would include an estimated 900,000 people in Karamoja in the northeast, 1.2 million IDPs in the north, and 200,000 people in Amuria and Katakwi Districts in the east. Given the increase in needs from an estimated 2.15 million people in the current quarter, the sharp increase from current forecasts for the coming quarter, and the likelihood of increased severity of food insecurity in this scenario, additional and immediate resources would be required to provide assistance to these vulnerable populations, including food and non-food assistance. However, given resource shortfalls already exhibited in the current quarter, humanitarian organizations will likely face even deeper shortfalls in this scenario, and will struggle to meet the needs of those newly food insecure.

Figure 3. Worst-case food security scenario, January to March 2009



Data: WFP Uganda, UN FAO, GoU; Graphic: FEWS NET Uganda

For more information on FEWS NET's Food Insecurity Severity Scale, please see: www.fews.net/FoodInsecurityScale

In Karamoja, higher-than-normal rains will cause damage to roads, decreasing food availability and market access. Reduced income opportunities, meanwhile, could lead to increased road ambushes as armed gangs intensify attacks on vehicles and pedestrians, looting goods and other items for sale. As a result, vehicular and pedestrian travel and transport will decrease, including by traders supplying the region, causing market supplies to drop and further raising prices. Insecurity on the roads and fear of theft will also reduce the movement of people in search of alternative food sources, as well as livestock movements to markets. Heavy rains and increased wetness is also likely to create conditions favorable to the spread of livestock disease, leading to deteriorated body conditions and, consequently, lower livestock prices. These occurrences will negatively impact the purchasing power of pastoral and agropastoral households as they cope to meet their household cereal needs at a time of high food prices, and will be unable to purchase as much food per livestock sold. Moreover, although vaccinations will be taking place, the high prevalence of *Peste des Petits Ruminants* and CBPP will outweigh remedial actions taken, providing minimal recovery for livestock owners in the short January to March 2009 period. Given these conditions, more households in Karamoja would be highly food insecure, and at a higher severity than in the most-likely scenario, throughout the first quarter of 2009. The total number of people food insecure would increase to as much as 900,000 people, or almost 90 percent of the estimated population of Karamoja.

In northern Uganda, a resurgence of the LRA and banditry and increasing civil instability would make households abandon their homes and fields, lead to population re-displacements, and limit household access to harvest 2008 second-season crops, reducing their replenishment of stocks and increasing their food insecurity in the outlook quarter. By this time, conditions would have already improved to such an extent that many non-food service providers would have already relocated. These new developments would thus come at a time when there is limited access to clean water, sanitation, and health services, leading to a fast deterioration of humanitarian conditions in IDP camps and rapid onset of food insecurity. By the close of the first quarter in 2009, at least 1.2 million people would be displaced, highly food insecure, and in need of external assistance.

Higher than normal rainfall in Amuria and Katakwi districts in the east would destroy 2008 second-season crops, leading to lower than average harvests and food availability in early 2009, reducing food security overall. Reduced production will limit supplies to markets, increase prices, thereby limiting access to markets for depend households. With limited harvests, there will be fewer labor opportunities as well, and leading to a continuation of these districts' moderately food insecurity status. Given that eastern districts no longer receive food assistance, in this scenario, there would be a need to reassess and determine the number of affected people; for planning purposes, an estimated 200,000 people would be moderately food insecure.

Other bimodal areas of the country are expected to remain generally food secure, even in the worst-case scenario, with households having benefited from average 2008 second-season harvests. Potentially higher than normal rainfall late in 2008 would have limited impact on agricultural production, given that crop harvests may be hurried to safeguard them. Normal production levels would support household food availability and access, with only isolated deficits that can be covered through transfers and markets, given that prices are expected to have stabilized in the outlook quarter. Moreover, an increased incidence of crop and/or livestock disease in these areas is not expected in this worst-case scenario.

Table 2. Scenario assumptions and indicators
Worst-case food security scenario,
January to March 2009

- Civil insecurity worsens in northern Uganda, causing new displacement.
- Reduced IDP access to 2008 second season harvests, low food restocking and so reduced food security.
- Inundated fields results in lower than normal harvests in Amuria and Katakwi districts, restricting household access to food, market supplies.
- Increased civil insecurity in Karamoja restricts movement, crop supplies and access to markets, where prices are higher than normal, limiting access to alternate food sources.
- Higher livestock disease incidence reduces body conditions and low prices and incomes so deterioration in terms of trade and purchasing power for pastoral/agropastoral households
- Limited livestock recovery from *Pest des Petits Ruminants* (PPR) maintains low small ruminant prices and incomes so hinders households' coping recovery
- Food security remains normal in bimodal areas.